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## ZIONISM AS IMPERIALISM

By Frank C. Hanighen

Almost a century before American Zionist organizations gathered in Madison Square Garden to demand help from President Truman, that auditorium's ancestor, Castle Garden, witnessed a similar demonstration.

Kossuth, the leader of the Hungarian independence movement, arrived in New York in 1851 and the Garden was thronged with enthusiastic admirers. Other welcomes throughout the country followed, not to mention some fair words from Secretary of State Daniel Webster. Americans demanded freedom for Hungary; denounced Austrian oppression of the Magyars.

But ere long Kossuth returned to Europe, empty-handed and embittered, without the men, material and money which he had hoped to get from the American Government. Henry Clay had explained to him that we had a foreign policy which forbade interference in the affairs of other countries. Kossuth and those Americans profoundly devoted to his cause suffered the same disillusion which is the lot of the Zionists today.

The Zionist cause, to be sure, is not an exact parallel to that of Kossuth. But the American sympathy for that cause is of the same general character as that manifested often during the past 150 years for various oppressed nationalities. A long list could be compiled of all the racial pressure groups -- Irish, Poles, Armenians, Chinese, etc. -- which have drawn the support of other Americans in their efforts to obtain liberation for the lands from which they emigrated.

This meddling in foreign quarrels has been the despair of those who have aspired to create a truly American foreign policy. Often Americans who headed committees for the freedom of this or that nationality seemed like that Mrs. Jellyby in Bleak House who left her home in disorder to go forth and battle for the oppressed Africans.

Impracticable or not, the interest of Americans in such causes must be recognized as a part of the great tradition of American idealism. Despite the charges that Jewish money and votes have dictated our policy toward Palestine, there is indeed an altruistic impulse behind White House declarations for a Jewish State in Palestine. No human being could remain insensitive to the recent sufferings of the Jews in Europe

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nor to their desire to emigrate. Moreover, the tragedy and romance of the Jewish epic has quite naturally captured the American imagination.

## II

But the Palestine imbroglio is actually not at all in the same category as the nationalist causes which have attracted American sympathy in the past. It is perhaps politically profitable to portray the Palestine story as a fight between Jews and the British Empire. But the American attitude might be drastically modified if it were generally realized that a decisive factor in the problem has been largely ignored.

When Jews after the last war began to flock to Palestine, they found it inhabited, not by aboriginal tribes of small numbers and negligible cohesion, but by a talented people who had lived in Palestine for 2,000 years, with roots deep in the soil to which they were strongly attached, with a history, literature, art and culture worthy of respect. It was the Jews' misfortune that the Arabs who lived in Palestine had begun to awake, nationally and culturally, after centuries of Turkish rule. "Revolt in the Desert" was recognized and fostered at first by the British. A number of Arab States, of varying degrees of independence, arose after the last war. Their existence as States was inspiration for Arab nationalism in Palestine resulting in Arab outbreaks both against the British and Jews, notably in 1928 and 1936.

Jewish immigration has aroused the opposition of Palestine Arabs because it is a threat to their national survival, not because it is Jewish. The Arabs would as stubbornly oppose the incursion of 500,000 Italians or Frenchmen. The Arab reaction is based on the desire for freedom from foreign control, and "self-determination." This Wilsonian principle, it should be remembered, is the accepted political expression of our traditional sympathy for foreign nationalist causes.

The fact is that Zionism, as many Jews now admit, is a form of political nationalism. But it is more than that. Because of the involved political and territorial circumstances which Zionists had to exploit, this budding nationalism developed at the start as a queer kind of imperialism. Here is a unique case of a people, dispersed for centuries, returning to re-conquer their homeland. But the fact of conquest definitely places the undertaking in the category of imperialism.

Zionists had to erect their projected political state on the unsound moral foundation of the expropriation of a native people. The little imperialism was fostered at first by the greater imperialism of the British Empire. No longer a fledgling, the Zionist imperialism now challenges the original sponsor, without which it could not have arisen

and probably cannot indefinitely exist.

There are only a handful of Beirut College graduates in America to tell this story, and their voices are lost amid opposing arguments. There are no Arab votes to make Congressmen and the Administration listen. On the other hand, Zionists play an important and brilliant part in American intellectual life and they have numerous and well-financed organizations.

### III

Zionist nationalism started pick-a-back on British imperialism. There is no evidence for accusations that the British agreed to the Balfour Declaration of 1917 so as to win over Jewish sentiment in the United States, and thereby help to bring this country into the war. But, as the headquarters of Zionism had been Berlin, and as it was feared Germany would persuade Turkey to give Jews a national home in Palestine, both Britain and France were by no means averse to a counter maneuver. There is little doubt that Palestine's importance to the Suez Canal and the British lifeline to the East was a primary consideration. These circumstances shaped the imperialist development of Zionism.

The first steps were hesitant, much to the credit of the Jews. The Jewish community of Great Britain was actually opposed to the Balfour Declaration. The community's leaders were in favor of "cultural Zionism," the making of Palestine into a spiritual center for Jewish thought and culture; but they wanted none of any Zionist political state there or elsewhere, nor of any special political rights for Jews. Their case was stated in a very outspoken letter to the London Times, May 24, 1917, signed by David L. Alexander, President of the Board of Deputies of British Jews, and Claude G. Montefiore, President of the Anglo-Jewish Association -- the two most powerful British Jewish organizations. It said in part that the British Jews feared a Jewish political state in Palestine would "have the effect throughout the world of stamping the Jews as strangers in their native lands, and of undermining their hard-won position as citizens and nationals of those lands." This letter displayed much foresight.

It would be a mistake to think that American Jews are less prescient. The leading article in the August number of Commentary, a new Jewish intellectual magazine which takes a critical attitude toward political Zionism, is entitled "Nationalism Is the Enemy." Its author, Ernest Munz, points out that political Zionism is nationalism. "Zionism was a true offspring of the combination of nationalism and neo-romanticism that characterized the Nineteenth Century." Munz concludes:

"the time has come [for the Jews] to fight political nationalism uncompromisingly and on principle, inside Jewish life, as well as outside."

#### IV

This spirit has been otherwise expressed on the political plane by the rise of the Council for Judaism, a Jewish anti-Zionist organization, fighting in the "battle of committees." Indeed some disintegration of the Zionist front seems in progress, with many Jews and Zionist organizations moved to reconsideration of Zionism since the King David Hotel bombing outrage. Some of this revolt of American Jews against orthodox Zionism may derive from the thinking of such organs as Commentary. But the American Jewish community is also increasingly aware of the developing world struggle for power. As Americans, they have begun to sense a contradiction between their pro-Zionist inclinations and the muddled outlines of American power politics.

Russia's expansionism has split Big Three harmony and thrown Britain and the United States into a de facto alliance. The developing struggle between the two sides has few points of friction more dangerous than that of the Near East. Russia is strenuously courting the Arabs in that area; and Britain is rebuilding its fences among the Arab States. Zionism has become a tragic card in this furious diplomatic game.

Republican politicians may think it smart work to beat the Zionist drum in an effort to outbid Democrats for the Bronx vote. They are unwittingly tinkering with great and dangerous forces. For the new Arab movement is a part of the great Moslem world, with 300,000,000 followers spread over Asia and Africa.

That part of the American dream which looks to a "new Jerusalem" may suffer a terrible disillusion in the process of forcing a Jewish state in Palestine. Only a free and peaceful solution, satisfactory to Arab and Jew alike, can provide a sound basis for the future of this area. America can play a constructive role not only by clarifying the issue, but also by refraining from irresponsible interference.

The American dream of a free Jewish Palestine may well be more than slightly out of repair by the time the politicians and newspaper impresarios turn their hands to other topics. It is not for Gentiles to lecture Jews. But Gentiles should stop trying to exploit Jewish voters and readers for election and circulation purposes. In the sensible words of Judge Proskauer, "now is the time for neither bomb nor bombast."

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By Frank C. Hanighen

September 18, 1946

"You should say what you mean," the March Hare remarked. "I do," Alice replied; "At least I mean what I say -- that's the same thing, you know." But the Hatter retorted, "Not the same thing a bit! You might as well say that 'I see what I eat' is the same thing as 'I eat what I see!'"

The Wallace-Byrnes-Truman incident of last week certainly had more than a touch of Wonderland. Mr. Truman said that he meant what Mr. Wallace said, and that both meant what Mr. Byrnes said at Stuttgart. Textually, the Wallace speech was as harmonious with the Stuttgart document as an America First speech by Col. Lindbergh was with the utterances of Robert Sherwood and the Fight for Freedom Committee in 1941.

One new fact emerged. Mr. Wallace no longer believes in "one world." Just a few years ago, to suggest that America had no interest in what went on in Eastern Europe would have been rank heresy. Mr. Wallace was then a principal proponent of the idea that the inhabitants of Waukesha, Wis., have a vital interest in occurrences in Warsaw, Poland. Today, Wallace plumps for "spheres of influence" and says that America "should recognize that we have no more business in the political affairs of Eastern Europe than Russia has in the political affairs of Latin America, Western Europe and the United States." This looks very much like the isolationism that Wallace formerly denounced. As John O'Donnell in the N. Y. Daily News put it, "The footsteps of Henry Wallace down the sawdust trail to the mourning bench for one-world sinners were still echoing in this Capital today."

One extraordinary contradiction: Mr. Wallace courted Communist gratitude, but two days later was slapped in the face by Molotov. The latter, speaking to the Paris Peace Conference, repudiated Wallace's "spheres of influence" policy, classed advocates of such a policy as men who would "divide the world" and likened them to Mr. Chamberlain at Munich. Molotov is still a "one world" supporter. But his remarks in the same speech about Western democracy being "out of date" indicate the "one world" for which he works.

The most serious aspect of the whole affair is the clear fact that there is no co-ordination between the various divisions of the Truman Administration. While Cabinet Member Wallace was differing sharply with Cabinet Member Byrnes, to the confusion of the world about American foreign policy, White House Stabilizer John Steelman was overruling Mr. Truman's War Stabilization Board in the maritime strike, to the bewilderment of all on the domestic front. Steelman approved the seamen's wage raise, which the WSB blocked. This decision throws into great uncertainty the whole wage and price situation.

Whatever may have been Mr. Roosevelt's faults and the conflicts within his Administration, he did run his show. Citizens could make their plans accordingly. In 1944, for instance, he slapped down Mr. Wallace in favor of Mr. Jesse Jones, in a celebrated incident; on another occasion he disciplined the Right Wing of his Government. But he was the boss. Mr. Truman has yet to prove that he is the master of his house.

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No one has umpired the current dispute between scientists and admirals as to who took the decision to drop the atom bomb on Hiroshima. Dr. Henry Noble MacCracken, President of Vassar, speaking at a scientific meeting at Oxford, says it was a scientist. The London Daily Mail (Overseas edition, August 10-17) quotes MacCracken: "Many were doubtful about dropping the atomic bomb. They sent a round robin to President Truman at Potsdam and President Truman replied to Professor

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Arthur Compton: 'Put up to you the responsibility whether to drop the bomb or not.' It was a terrible responsibility for one man to take, but, having thought about it, he recommended to the President's Department that the bomb should be dropped."

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The Administration's industrial relations machinery failed to prevent or to shorten the severe maritime strike, once it started, and may hamper the settlement of coming labor disputes. The National Labor Relations Board seems to have lost its grip. The Federal Conciliation Service has a long way to go before it can meet emergencies. And prominent in the middle of this picture is an ineffective Secretary of Labor and Labor Department.

President Truman, who lost confidence in Secretary Schwollenbach during the big strikes last spring, has for some months been trying to maneuver him into tendering his resignation. He has reportedly done so specifically on three occasions. (1) When Truman made the able John Steelman his labor mediator and adviser last April, it was expected that Schwollenbach would leave. (2) Still in his post in June, Schwollenbach tried to persuade the President to take over the long strike-bound J. L. Case agricultural machinery plant. The President turned him down flat. (3) Finally, the President inflicted a more public and humiliating rebuff. Schwollenbach backed the CIO in their effort to represent American labor in the International Labor Office, long a preserve of the AFL. The President took the opposite course and insisted on appointment of an AFL man. This time, the President felt sure that the Labor Secretary would ask to be relieved of his duties, but was again disappointed.

It is believed that Schwollenbach, relying on an early assurance by Truman of appointment to the Supreme Court, is hanging on in hopes that he will be given the next vacancy on that body.

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The unfairness of Secretary Wallace's attack on "British imperialism" in the Middle East becomes clear when it is realized that a truly independent Government, headed by Pandit Nehru, has been established in India. Britain has taken the "brightest jewel" in the imperial crown and handed it back to the Indian people. The test of British sincerity has been the shift of British support from the Moslems to the Hindus. Britain's former imperial "divide-and-rule" policy depended in large part on pitting the two elements -- Hindus and Moslems -- against each other. The British Government many months ago began to desert the Moslem League and to play ball with the largely Hindu Congress Party. All observers agree that Britain intends to see it through on this line.

The recent Moslem-Hindu riots are not unconnected with the fact that this change has been rather abrupt. Less than a year ago, the British Government was still trying to "build up" Mr. Jinnah and his Moslem League, in the old imperial manner. Consequently, the Moslem League leaders are intensely angry at being let down so suddenly, and in their rage turn to desperate tactics. It is believed that the Moslem provincial Government in Bengal was critically negligent in failing to prevent and suppress communal riots; and some observers believe that that Moslem Government actually connived in arousing the disorders. Some American observers also suspect that a few old British civil servants, who have not yet discarded their former "pro-Moslemism," may have had something to do with the situation in Bengal.

The British had to oppose the Moslems' principal demand, Pakistan, because the creation of two autonomous Moslem areas in Northwest and Northeast India would disrupt the communications system in India. The British want a functioning economic system in India, because they hope to trade extensively with that country. Of equal or perhaps greater importance, Pakistan would set up potential sources of friction in two strategic areas which have traditionally been the land routes into India from the North, from Russia. The military reasons for these areas being under a strong central government are obvious.

While the stature of Mr. Byrnes among world Foreign Ministers has increased conspicuously in the past six months, his political future at home remains uncertain. The attack on his foreign policy by a fellow member of the Cabinet is indicative of the continued strength of hostile forces within his own party. The forthcoming elections will challenge that strength. But whatever the results at the polls, State Department circles believe that the Secretary will still face serious threats to his position.

If the Democrats win the elections, the victory will be interpreted as justification of Mr. Robert Hannegan's bid for support of the CIO-PAC. Leaders of that organization could then be expected to press for modification of Byrnes' stiff attitude toward Russia. Should he refuse, the PAC-CIO would undoubtedly urge his dismissal and replacement by a Secretary of State more sympathetic to their views.

On the other hand, if the Republicans triumph, taking possession of at least the lower House, Byrnes will very probably encounter a heavy barrage of Congressional criticism for his personnel policy in the State Department. Not only Republicans, but also Democrats, have frequently protested the appointment and retention of fellow-travellers in the Department. Some of Byrnes' subordinates have tried to placate this Congressional resentment by professing to dismiss many of these subversive individuals. But, it turns out that the Department has simply screened replacements on a loyalty test and has made no real effort to eliminate those fellow-travellers who already hold jobs.

Byrnes himself has had no time to deal with this condition, but he nevertheless must bear responsibility for its existence. And a Republican House, with a special committee investigating the situation, would hardly spare him. It may be recalled that Republican Leader Joe Martin has promised, if the Republicans win, to "start every day with a prayer and end it with a probe."

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Chiang Kai-shek's military victories in North China have driven the Communists out of about 50 rail centers and forced them to whine for a "truce," which they hope the hitherto easy-going General Marshall will support. If Marshall does so, the Communists' maneuver will result only in a breathing spell before they again resume civil war, in a political and military strategy which should now be familiar. The American China Policy Association performed a service last week in releasing a so far unpublished Communist document to a press which unfortunately seemed unable to grasp the import. It is a translation from the Chinese of "Notice No. 16 of the Central Political Bureau of the Communist Party of China," and is dated March 16, 1946. Competent quarters in Washington believe that the document is authentic.

One passage very frankly states the over-all strategy of the Chinese Communists: "The new function of our delegation to the (Truce) Executive Headquarters in Chungking should be to strongly oppose the transportation by the United States of Kuomintang [The Chinese Nationalist Party] troop reinforcements to the Northeast so that our heroic, democratic, united army of the Northeast may achieve great and decisive victory. . . . Comrades of our delegations to the (Truce) Executive Headquarters and in Chungking, moreover, should use revolutionary tactics to estrange the relations between the United States and Chiang Kai-shek. We must render the Kuomintang entirely isolated, both in China and internationally. At the same time, we should use delaying tactics not to solve any problem by consultation with the Kuomintang, in order to shake the confidence of the people in it and to bring to it political instability."

The final sentences lay bare the motive behind much of the agitation against Chiang's Government in America: "We should, while negotiating in order to secure the sympathy of the American Government, continue fighting so as to arouse the abhorrence of American public opinion. Only by so doing can we break American loans and assistance to the Kuomintang. Thus, the culmination of our revolution and victory will soon arrive."

# Notes and Quotes

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General MacArthur's regime in Japan shines in contrast to the mismanagement in Germany. Yet the American occupation in Japan presents a picture far from reassuring, according to the Reverend Theodore D. Walser, former missionary to Japan, writing in Fellowship (July, 1946):

"Theft, hoarding, smuggling, inflation (the yen -- at par fifty cents -- is sometimes quoted at one cent in value), black market, orphan bands, and food riots prevail. Children are living under temple verandas and robbing the graves of the food offerings to ancestors. Ex-soldiers are trading their highly prized medals for food. People are eating garbage and, in one city, trucks are required to carry off the dead bodies collected from the streets. A group of GIs (Japanese-Americans) recently were gently mobbed in Hibiya Park, Tokyo, and implored to use their influence to get food through to Japan from outside. GHQ in Japan is charged with having sent March food stocks to Sapporo, Sendai, and other areas where American troops are stationed, the idea being 'to prevent absolute starvation where food riots are likely to disturb Americans and let the Japanese elsewhere starve quietly, bothering only their own authorities' (underscoring mine). . . . Ninety per cent of the former government leaders have been disqualified by an Allied purge directive. One can visualize what would happen to our government if ninety per cent of the men who had supported the war were disqualified."

Reverend Walser, noting the drastic reparations orders, says: "At whose door the blame for the economic strangulation of Japan can be laid is not clear. General MacArthur is supreme commander, but repeated reports come through that although opposed to what is happening, he can do nothing since he, too, receives directives. A study issued in February by the Department of Commerce shows that the elimination of Japan as a leading exporting country will stimulate the industrialization of other countries and 'foster the foreign trade of the United States.' Was this one of the purposes of the war from our side? At any rate the seeds of another war are being sown and American democracy is being identified, in the eyes of Japan and the Far East, with famine and exploitation."

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The best editorial last week, we think, was one in the Wall Street Journal, September 12, entitled "The Economy Wave." Its four lines speak volumes:

"Secretary Snyder has told reporters that the Treasury Department has devised a way to save \$150,000 annually on the carbon paper used in writing checks. That, we think, is very fine and we know how Mr. Snyder can save still more.

"All that is necessary is not to write so many checks."

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Innocents Abroad Department ---- Professor Harold J. Laski, after a trip to Russia, writes his "Impression of Stalin," in the Washington Post, September 7: "In the normal sense of the term, I do not think he can be called a dictator. Powerful, yes; influential, yes; likely to have his views weighed with a care and an eagerness that no one else can rival -- that is also true. . . . He has a deep respect for power as such. The strong state, the strong man, strength in itself, these mean a good deal to him."

Or, maybe not so innocent. For we find the British Leftist pundit adding: "Though I doubt whether he has the cosmopolitan outlook of Lenin, he sees beyond Russia itself to the conviction that socialism is an international idea, the salvation of which depends upon its ability to obtain international expression."

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